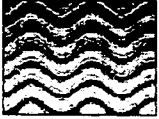


IO19527



Nicholas
Mastrota/DC/USEPA/US
04/29/2008 10:46 AM

To Norman Spurling/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
cc
bcc
Subject More info on the zinc phosphide goose kills

Norman,

-001 There are many news articles on the internet about zinc phosphide being the cause of the recent kill of 67 geese at Keizer, Oregon. I do not know how many you need to enter because they all say about the same thing. Significantly, however, an Associate Press story says that previous goose deaths in 2005 were also linked to zinc phosphide. Here are two examples.

-002 http://blog.oregonlive.com/breakingnews/2008/04/farm_golf_course_pesticide_lin.html

<http://dhweb.sv.publicus.com/article/20080423/NEWS03/183800447>

Here is an Oregon Dept. of Ag advisory from 2005 that also states that zinc phosphide poisoning caused the death of geese:

http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/PEST/zinc_phosphide.shtml

Nick

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Farm, golf course pesticide linked to mass Keizer geese death

Posted by mrollins April 22, 2008 06:41AM

part of - 001
Update to IO19526

A pesticide typically applied by farmers and golf course managers to kill rodents has been linked to the recent die-off of more than 65 Canada cackling geese at a private lake in Keizer, according to a story in the Salem Statesman-Journal.

Five of six samples taken from goose carcasses tested positive for zinc phosphide, according to results from Michigan State University's Center for Integrative Toxicology.

Zinc phosphide is used to control voles, mice and ground squirrels, particularly in grass fields where rodents damage crops, state officials said Monday. When zinc phosphide is ingested, it is converted by stomach acids to phosphene gas, which attacks the heart, kidney and liver.

Classified as a restricted use pesticide, zinc phosphide can only be sold at licensed facilities, said Dale Mitchell, assistant administrator of the pesticides division of the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Mitchell said the agency is tracking pesticide sales in the Keizer area to determine where the pesticide was applied, and whether it was done legally.

"Number one, we want to make sure that the materials are being used according to label directions", Mitchell said. "And number two, if there is a misuse of the product, contrary to label instructions, then we need to communicate that to the parties."

Large die-offs of Canada geese also occurred at Staats Lake in 2000, 2001, 2005 and 2007, newspaper reports indicate.

Previous investigations tied the bird fatalities to pesticide contamination and aspergillosis, a respiratory disease contracted from eating moldy grain and a frequent cause of geese deaths in the Willamette Valley.

- 002
Mitchell said zinc phosphide was linked to bird deaths of 2005, and the agriculture department notified farmers about the consequences of misusing it.

Categories: Breaking News

Comments

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New Updates The Oregonian web site

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HeraldNet

Everett, Wash.

Published: Wednesday, April 23, 2008

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Deaths of 65 Canada geese linked to pesticide in Oregon

Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. -- A pesticide typically applied by farmers and golf course managers to kill rodents has been linked to the recent die-off of more than 65 Canada cackling geese at a private lake in Keizer.

Five of six samples taken from goose carcasses tested positive for zinc phosphide, according to results from Michigan State University's Center for Integrative Toxicology.

Zinc phosphide is used to control voles, mice and ground squirrels, particularly in grass fields where rodents damage crops, state officials said Monday.

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Mitchell said the agency is tracking pesticide sales in the Keizer area to determine where the pesticide was applied, and whether it was done legally.

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Zinc phosphide advisory

Background

- -002

During 2005 several agencies investigated the deaths of migratory geese within the Willamette Valley. These agencies included the United States Department of the Interior-Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). In most instances, the affected geese were "cackling Canada geese", or "cacklers" (*Branta canadensis minima*). These birds are considered to be migratory and protected by international treaties and federal and state laws.

-002

Investigation details

Sample collection and analysis conducted during 2005 concluded that zinc phosphide ingestion was the cause of death in many of the birds. This compound is the active ingredient in several pesticide products used for rodent control. Officials believe geese ingest bait products containing zinc phosphide while feeding. Broadcast application of these baits onto sites where geese have been observed increases the likelihood of geese ingesting these products. Therefore, broadcast applications of bait containing zinc phosphide have specific limitations in the Willamette Valley. As a reminder, the use of any pesticide product inconsistent with its label, as well as using a pesticide product in a manner that might adversely affect migratory birds or other non-target wildlife, is a violation of federal and state laws.

As a result of the 2005 investigations, cooperating agencies and agricultural groups are making special efforts to inform producers of the potential risks associated with the use of rodent baits containing zinc phosphide. Zinc phosphide products are important tools for the control of rodents in many agricultural crops grown in the Willamette Valley. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) regulates the registration and use of pesticide products nationally. These regulations include authorizing individual pesticide products for use at national and local level as tools to control specific pests on minor crops.

Conclusions

USEPA is aware of the 2005 incidents and the test results. It is possible that if goose deaths continue in the Willamette Valley due to ingesting rodent baits containing zinc phosphide, USEPA may further restrict the use of these products.

Please remember, and instruct your employees, to read and follow all pesticide product label instructions. Following these instructions will keep you in compliance with the law and help to maintain the availability of these important pest control products.

Distribution

This document was distributed in hard-copy format to licensed applicators, consultants and restricted-use pesticide dealers in Oregon. The following organizations and representatives have been instrumental in the production of this advisory notice:

- Barry Bushue - President, Oregon Farm Bureau
- Katy Coba - Director, Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Roy Elicker - Director, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Scott McKinnie - Executive Director, FarWest Agribusiness Association
- Jim Stienbaugh - United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service
- Terry Witt - Executive Director, Oregonians for Food and Shelter

Additional resources

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Telephone: 503-947-6322

E-mail: Bradley.d.bailes@state.or.us

<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/>

Oregon Department of Agriculture - Pesticides Division

Telephone: 503-986-4635

E-mail: pestx@oda.state.or.us

<http://oregon.gov/ODA/PEST>

http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/PEST/zinc_phosphide.shtml

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4/29/2008

United States Department of the Interior - Fish and Wildlife Service

Telephone: 503-682-6131

E-mail: Jim_Stinebaugh@fws.gov

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